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# AFFORDANCES AND CONSTRAINTS OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN ePARTICIPATION: PERSPECTIVES FROM INDONESIAN POLITICIANS

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## Abstract

*In this study, we explore social media use by politicians by investigating affordances, effects and associated constraints of introducing social media within eParticipation. Based on an interpretive case study in the Indonesian context, involving members of both national and provincial parliament, this study unearths internal and external affordances offered by social media. Internally, among politicians, social media enable, for example, idea storming and information sharing; while externally in the relation with their constituents, social media is used, for instance, for opinion gathering and political networking. These affordances yield both internal and external effects, such as broadened perspective, improved internal political supports, better public control, and better information for decision-making. This study also unveils constraints that hinder politicians in utilizing possibilities offered by social media in the eParticipation context. Theoretical contributions and practical implication are also presented, including classification of internal and external social media affordance, identification of constraints and affordance effects. This study is adding contribution to practice by helping politicians to design social media strategy for eParticipation.*

**Keywords:** *eParticipation, social media, politicians, Indonesia, developing country.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

There is a growing interest in investigating the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to boost transparency, delivery services improvement and citizen participation in decision-making processes (Medaglia 2012; Sæbø, Rose, and Flak 2008). This research area, termed eParticipation, focuses on process and structure through which ICT supports relationship amongst citizens, governments, and public institutions (Sæbø, Braccini, & Federici 2014), and is triggered by a demand of change in political environment by citizens (Sobaci & Karkin 2013). Currently, the use of ICT by elected officials are becoming all more important due to the potential of ICT-based innovative tools to transform the relationship between the representatives and citizens (Sobaci & Karkin 2013). Social media is a collective term that describes user generated content technology facilitating collaboration and discussion, emphasizing social interaction and Internet-based technology that can add value to the audience from collaborative information sharing and exchange (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen 2012; Kamel 2014; Sobaci & Karkin 2013). Increasingly, politicians are harnessing social media potentiality for various political agenda. Social media may improve policy making processes, promote citizen participation, increase sharing information, and boost transparency and accountability (Ae Chun et al. 2012; Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia 2013). While social media initiatives for politicians are found promising, some still rely more on traditional media considering the area they represent lacks of Internet exposure. Politicians who choose not to adopt social media for political purposes may perceive that social media have more obstacles than positive potentialities to achieve goals (Azab, Farzali, Zaher, & Sayed 2015; Karkin 2014).

To gain a better understanding of technology-involved practice and consequences introducing social media within eParticipation projects, we introduce the Technology Affordance and Constraint Theory (TACT) (Majchrzak & Markus 2013). By doing so, we investigated potentialities of social media as well as its possible factors hindering in utilizing social media for eParticipation. The concept of affordance originates from ecological psychology field by Gibson (1977) who defined affordance as action potential of a material that will be perceived differently by each independent depending on their capabilities (Jones 2003).

In this scene, the use of social media for eParticipation in two different level of centrality in Indonesian parliament represents specific cases to generate new empirical knowledge within the area of eParticipation research. Affordances and constraints are identified based on politicians' use of social media. The research questions are: (a) What affordances are offered by social media use by politicians? (b) What are constraints hindering the use of social media by politicians for eParticipation initiatives? And (c) What are the effects of social media use in eParticipation?

The identification of affordances and constraints may help to understand the role of social media within eParticipation initiatives in Indonesia. In 2016, the number of Internet users in Indonesia is expected to reach 100 million, mainly dominated by young adults. Even with the interest of communication via social media between young people and politicians, there is still a lack of research on how the impact on political changes from such activities (Abbott, MacDonald, & Givens 2011).

This study is important for two reasons. Firstly, we pay attention to particular contextual issue area within Indonesia that may influence encouragement or discouragement of social media use. Looking back to Indonesia when it was under Suharto regime, citizen participation was restricted if not discouraged. The decision-making process was very elitist (Wahid & Sæbø 2014). Secondly, it investigates social media affordances and constraints from a less-articulated context in the research literature. Indonesia is among a developing country that exemplifies a fast-growing democratic society in the world and is hence an exceptional case to focus on within the eParticipation area.<sup>1</sup>

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. In Section 2 we present theories on TACT in information system followed by an explanation on method and context in Section 3. Then in Section 4

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/07/five-reasons-why-indonesia-presidential-election-matters>

we present findings that are organized and presented based on the categories and lastly we conclude the paper by reviewing and discussing findings in section 5 and concluding remarks presenting research implication in Section 6.

## **2 THEORETICAL PREMISES: TECHNOLOGY AFFORDANCES AND CONSTRAINTS**

The concept of affordance has become popular in the area of Information Systems (IS) to explore how work practices within organization arrangements adopt to an innovative use of ICT (Zammuto et al. 2007). Originating from the work of Gibson (Gibson 1977; Gibson 1986) affordances can be defined as the interaction between an actor (the individual or organization involved) and the environment (the surroundings of the actor), including the properties of the actor and of the environment (Markus et al., 2008). The term was introduced into the field of science and technology to recognize how the materiality of objects favours, shapes, invites and constrains specific uses (Zammuto et al. 2007), and is also used to describe action possibilities allowed by material properties within IS (Markus et al., 2008). The concept helps to explain how individuals or organizations with particular capabilities and goals may use technology differently from other organizations or individuals (Majchrzak & Markus 2013)

Affordances are neither properties of the environment nor characteristics of the individual, but relative to the interaction between the actor and the artefact (Chemero 2003). Pozzi et al. (2014) argue that affordances exist as a relationship between an actor and an artefact, being relative to the action capabilities of the actors, reflecting possible actions on the artefact itself. Affordances need to be perceived and actualized by goal-oriented actors to achieve outcomes (Bernhard, Recker, and Burton-Jones 2013; Markus & Silver 2008). Aligned with this view, Leonardi (2013) introduces the concept of shared affordances, in which individual actors manifest a similar use of technology features, and argues that affordances at the organizational level are only actuated when (individuals) actors agree on the usage of a similar sequence of technology features. In addition, the actualisation of affordance as a generative mechanism will result to produce events (Pozzi, Pigni, & Vitari 2014). In other words, Actualization of affordance will produce expected outcome from the actualization and useful for realizing an ultimate organizational goal, presumed as affordance effect in the long term (Strong et al. 2014). Actualization of affordance may result in enabling condition for additional affordance, development of additional IS feature, and enabling organizational changes (Pozzi et al. 2014, p. 8)

Constraints refer to “ways in which an individual or organization can be held back from accomplishing a particular goal when using a technology or system” (Majchrzak & Markus 2013). By focusing not only on affordances but also on constraints, we may avoid deterministic and simplistic assumptions on the effect of introducing technology in organizations, allowing for investigating also the possibilities for people using technology in unintended ways (Majchrzak & Markus 2013). By so doing, researchers may identify elements that need to be managed and overcome to realize the potential of introducing ICT (Leonardi, 2011).

Examples from the IS area often focuses on functional affordances, focusing on the properties and functionalities of the technology, assuming that some pre-existing affordances exist, that are to be perceived and enacted by an actor (Zheng & Yu 2016). Contrary to such a realist perspective, where affordances are dispositional properties of the environment (Robey, Raymond, & Anderson 2012), a relational ontology of affordances view affordances as something arising from the practice that involves artefacts (Robey, Raymond, & Anderson 2012; Zheng & Yu 2016). Here, affordances are always emerging from social practices involving technology, and related to the experience, skills and cultural understanding of the user (Bloomfield, Latham, & Vurdubakis 2010), being relational and situated (Zheng & Yu 2016). Affordances involve a network of human, social, and technical objects, which in various combinations enable action at different levels of granularity (Bygstad, Munkvold, & Volkoff 2015). Such a practice-oriented view of affordances is relevant for the examination of users

with specific needs, goals and practices (Zheng & Yu 2016) in a particular historical, cultural and social context (Fayard & Weeks 2014; Jung & Lyytinen 2014).

### 3. RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHODS

The empirical study aims to present a description of social media affordance and constraint perceived by politicians in a different level of centrality in the Indonesian Parliament. Indonesia is among the top users of social media, with more than 70 million Facebook users and around 30 million Twitter users, with a population of 250 million (Wahid & Sæbø 2015). Indonesian government provides eParticipation initiatives using social media to increase the inclusion of citizen. However contextual issues such as limited Internet access and low rate of technology literacy may impede the development of social media for eParticipation in Indonesia (Dini 2016; Sri 2012; Lestari 2014). A case study was conducted at the national parliament in Jakarta and the provincial parliament in Yogyakarta. The Parliament at any level of centrality, national, provincial, and regional, is required to perform three functions; legislations, budgeting, and supervision<sup>2</sup>. These three functions are run within the framework of representation of people, where each parliament member shall give priority to the interests of the people they represent (constituents). One of its duties is to absorb, collect and follow up aspiration from constituents<sup>3</sup>.

With the increased interest of social media research in eParticipation area, there is a need for further empirical study paving some ways in understanding affordances and constraints along with its effects of eParticipation initiatives using social media. As an outline concept, we define eParticipation as the ICT use to better involve citizens in political decision-making which focuses on process and structure through which ICT supports relationships amongst citizens, governments, and public organizations (Dini 2016; Medaglia 2012; Sæbø et al. 2014). Likewise, varying concepts of social media are present. In this paper we focus on the content-sharing platforms that allow users to interact and create, edit, evaluate and/or link to content or other creators of content (Dini 2016; Mossberger, Wu, & Crawford 2013; O'reilly 2007; Treem & Leonardi 2012). Identified social media from this study include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, blogs, official parliament website and personal websites. Furthermore, the impacts of social media use on eParticipation from the perspective of politicians will give a further understanding of what affordances, constraints and effects could be offered by social media.

This study is based on interpretive research focusing on understanding of phenomena within their social and organizational context (Klein & Myers 1999). Data were collected from in-depth interviews, carried out in a semi-structured manner where only key questions are prepared, allowing for adjustments during the interview to ensure openness, flexibility, and improvisation (Myers & Newman 2007). Table 1 summarizes the distribution of interviews in terms of roles and level of centrality.

<i>Code</i>	<i>Background</i>
N1	Member of national parliament
N2	Member of national parliament
N3	Member of national parliament
P1	Chairman (and member) of provincial parliament
P2	Vice chairman (and member) of provincial parliament
P3	Vice chairman (and member) of provincial parliament
S1	Social media strategist
S2	Social media strategist

*Table 1. Background of informants*

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.dpr.go.id/tentang/keanggotaan>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dpr.go.id/tentang/tugas-wewenang>

We interviewed three members of national parliament, three members of provincial parliament, and two social media strategists. Social media strategists were included to enrich our comprehension on how politician use social media for eParticipation purpose. Informed consent and anonymity were offered in the beginning of an interview as part of ethics of interviewing (Myers & Newman 2007). Archival documents, such as citizens' email to the politicians, online information from social media includes postings on the blogs, Twitter, and Facebook, and archival data from politicians, was also investigated to gain a better understanding of the context.

The analysis of the data began with the coding process to let concepts emerge from the seemingly unstructured data. We use the concept of TACT to analyse the data. We use TACT for three reasons. First, it can be used to study technology-involved practices in particular individuals and consequences of technology use across individuals (Bernhard, Recker, & Burton-Jones 2013; Majchrzak & Markus 2013; Pozzi et al. 2014). Second, application of TACT promises to provide new insights in explaining the consequence of technology uses in individuals (Bernhard et al. 2013; Majchrzak & Markus 2013; Markus & Silver 2008; Pozzi et al. 2014). Lastly, this theory can also be used to get a better understanding to social media by identifying its affordances in eParticipation (Joseph 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Majchrzak, Faraj, Kane, & Azad 2013).

## **4. FINDINGS**

Parliament members use different social media services, such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, official parliament website, and personal website. We found that members of national and local parliament use social media differently. For instance, all national members have a personal website, whereas this is not the case among the local members.

### **4.1 Social Media Affordances**

Based on the identification of patterns and coding process, we introduce a classification of social media affordance emerging from eParticipation in Indonesian parliament both at the national and provincial level. We classified social media affordances into internal and external ones. The relationship between the categories is later discussed.

#### *4.1.1 Internal Affordances*

Internal affordances are affordances arising from the practice that involve social media potential capabilities perceived between politicians at the parliament. Identified internal affordances include idea storming, information storing, information sharing, peer entertaining, and an invitation for events.

Finding shows that social media create several affordances perceived by politicians. For instance, politicians use WhatsApp for internal coordination with fellow parliament members. We classify this affordance as idea storming. Politicians use social media to discuss issues with peers from the same commission; this is done to gather idea and perspective on the issue. Accordingly, social media are used for information storing include archiving idea, thoughts, and activities as politicians. Besides WhatsApp, politicians also use a personal website to document activity during the work as a parliamentarian and also during the recess period. Politicians use social media to share aspirations and problems they found from constituents during a site visit. Information sharing on such activity can lead to a discussion later on.

Apart from social media use in relation to work, politicians use social media for entertainment such as for ice-breaking by sending humorous content or jokes between them. In the event of an urgent meeting, usually an invitation is sent via WhatsApp since it is faster and more effective. One informant indicated that social media could be used as a reminder as it is direct, fast, and effective. Other explained that even though formal invitation for a meeting is sent to the desk, a follow up to remind politicians via social media are more effective. Table 2 summarizes our finding.

<i>Internal affordance</i>	<i>Excerpts</i>
Idea storming	<p>“Before we bring a topic to the formal meeting, we had a discussion with our members to understand it from a pragmatic view, regulation and political perspective from each individual.” (N2)</p> <p>“The discussion (on WhatsApp) usually happens when all members can’t directly meet, so whenever we have idea or perspective we use WhatsApp to have a discussion.” (P3)</p>
Information storing	<p>“If it is related to several points that need to be documented (as a reminder) for a discussion at the meeting, WhatsApp is really useful for that.” (P2)</p> <p>“I use it to archive my activities as parliamentarians and my thoughts. In the future, I will print them out, but prior to that all my ideas, activities and my political stand on a particular issue including media coverage are documented by my team on my website.” (N1)</p>
Information sharing	<p>“If there are friends who have to deal with media or a talk show on TV, they will inform us via WhatsApp.” (N2)</p>
Peer entertaining	<p>Social media is used for entertainment purpose such as for ice-breaking by sending humorous content or jokes between politicians (N2, S2)</p>
Invitation to events	<p>“For instance, if we have a meeting tomorrow, we remind our friends through WhatsApp” (N1)</p>

*Table 2. Internal affordances of social media use by politicians*

#### *4.1.2 External Affordances*

External affordances are perceived capabilities of social media between politicians and constituents. This includes value sharing, opinion gathering, political networking, personal branding, maintaining political existence, and promoting participation. Table 3 shows identified external affordances

<i>External affordance</i>	<i>Excerpts</i>
Value sharing	<p>“It becomes more interesting when it comes to policy, if it is discussed in social media there will be pros and cons, for instance about fighting corruption, it’s up to them how they judge my opinion on my social media.” (N3)</p> <p>“We want people to know us first because we can’t meet directly, at least they know us from our ideas and perspective on our social media.” (N2)</p>
Opinion gathering	<p>“Social media become my secondary tool for aspiration and opinion gathering outside traditional media, I’m more focused on direct work such as discussing the annual budget.” (N2)</p> <p>“Politician should find out what is going on out there, there is a lot of information being discussed by citizens, one way to do that is to turn to social media.” (P3)</p>
Political networking	<p>“I met a lot of people I mentioned who acknowledge me from my political stands on social media. I never meet them in person, just from social media.” (N3)</p>
Personal branding	<p>“At that time we still accompanied him, we were building his image from a very bad one. So, it’s like rebranding.” (S1)</p> <p>“Our goal is to make positive imaging of politicians on social media to approach youth.” (S2)</p> <p>“I share my activities so that people know what the representatives are doing, they can control and assess, whether it’s right or wrong.” (P3)</p>
Maintaining political existence	<p>“Social media will become the main tool for a political campaign in 2019.” (S2)</p> <p>“Our works in the political world also need existence.” (P2)</p>
Promoting participation	<p>“We give information, then people give a response back, the public will think oh he (politician) exists, meaning we (citizen) can join the discussion on social media.” (P2)</p>

*Table 3. External affordances of social media use by politicians*

## 4.2 Constraints

From the interviews we identified seven constraints from social media use in eParticipation include poor internet connection, limited capability, unreliable information, minimum impact, a distraction of focus, short-lived information, security issues, personal attacks, and unsupportive regulation. Constraints are factors that may hinder politicians in using social media to achieve goals. For instance, a regulation that does not cover freedom of speech will make politicians think twice before using social media for eParticipation. Security issues such as hacking may give rise to personal data insecurity for politicians due to thievery possibility. Moreover, unreliable information includes propaganda, hate speech, and defamatory statements may impede politicians in harnessing social media affordances.

<i>Constraint</i>	<i>Excerpts</i>
Poor Internet connection	<p>"In my constituency we don't talk about the Internet, (mobile) signal issue discussion is more relevant." (N1)</p> <p>"Many blank spots (no Internet exposure) in my constituency so I realized I did not use social media for my campaign." (N1)</p> <p>"Survey in suburbs areas showed a very small percentage of people using Twitter, FB is more, but still a very small percentage." (S1)</p>
Limited capability	<p>"It's only for a supporting tool, and it's impossible for me to handle it alone." (N3)</p> <p>"I don't use social media (now) for eParticipation because I'm not able to share time for communication." (N2)</p>
Unreliable information	<p>"There are some possibilities from social media that need to be observed, whether the information is true or hoax." (P2)</p> <p>"I used to pay attention to social media, now I don't, in my personal opinion noise that occurs on social media is not priority information I want to hear." (N1)</p> <p>"In fact, any perspective and image on social media can be directed." (S1)</p> <p>"Trending topic (on Twitter) can be engineered." (S1)</p>
Minimum impact	<p>"They had been sceptical with politics, then they somewhat began to care, now they are sceptical again seeing what happens, they are aware social media content can be designed and orchestrated, mostly artificial." (S1)</p> <p>"Turns out in Indonesia, the impact of a campaign using social media is not as big as we thought, social media in Jakarta is effective, but other small cities have minimum impact." (S1)</p> <p>"People in small cities may be unfamiliar with a discussion using social media, so the feedback is not yet optimal." (P1)</p> <p>"Not that much affected, I am more to the real situation when linking it with the making of policy." (N1)</p>
Distraction of focus	<p>"Let alone facilitate plenary meetings, representatives usually do not focus on the topic being discuss, they are busy reading and replying (social media)." (P2)</p> <p>"But sometimes it's too time-consuming, so I can't fully concentrate on my work." (N2)</p>
Short-lived information	<p>"One disadvantage of social media is its rapid circulation of information so people will easily forget because it's just temporary." (S2)</p>
Security issues	<p>"I was forced by the situation to block some contents, a lot of porn and advertising. Also, there are also cases of hacking that ever happened to my account." (P3)</p> <p>"Yes, my Facebook page once was hacked, but I let it go." (N2)</p>
Personal attacks	<p>"One negative side of social media is the potentiality of personal attack include bullying and judging." (P3)</p> <p>"When the comments have a bullying message, defamation or stereotyping I replied them directly." (N2)</p>
Unsupportive regulation	<p>"Yes indeed, it has been discussed in the commission, now waiting for an initiative from the government to revise the legislation." (N2)</p>

Table 4. Constraints hindering social media use by politicians



Constraints from using social media may be portrayed from two standpoints. They may manifest before the first use of social media and after using it for some time. For instance, a parliament member may use social media during the campaign but decided not to use it any longer after elected. Table 4 is the summary of identified constraints along with supporting excerpt from interview.

### 4.3 Social Media Effects

Politicians' compliance to act upon social media becomes materialization when Politicians behave to actualize affordances. These affordances will produce outcome known as affordance effect. Aligned with our division of internal and external affordance, here we present effect based on the identified affordance, internal and external (Table 5 and Table 6).

<i>Internal affordance effect</i>	<i>Excerpts</i>
Better documentation	"We can search for legislations from our eParliament site quickly because it is impossible to print and carry them out everywhere"(P2)
Broadened perspective	"We exchange idea and perspective with other women parliament members through perempuanparlemen.org"(P3)
Improved internal political support	When we meet with the minister, we will affirm our political stands based on our agreement on a pre-discussion from WhatsApp." (N2)
More fluid relationship	"Even though I'm not really active on all WhatsApp groups. I'm following all their activities and the chatter so I'm updated" (N3)
Better quality meeting	"By coordinating via WhatsApp beforehand, the meeting is more effective because our commission usually explains points agreed on WhatsApp." (N2) "Stimulating ideas and perspectives discussed on WhatsApp are extended to parliaments meeting."(P3)

Table 5. Internal affordance effects

<i>External affordance effect</i>	<i>Excerpts</i>
Better public control	"It is a form of public control towards me as a representative, also as a means to account what I do as a politician." (N3) "For pictures I shared on my social media, those are for a control purpose so they know what I'm doing." (N2)
Better information for decision making	"Opinions from citizen are important and influencing our political stands. Those opinions become one of our bases to compose policy from what is developing in the community." (P3) "Massive critics on legislation draft that are developing from social media influence the parliament in policy-making." (N3)
Better political network	"I have established good relationship with local journalists, so when I pay a visit to an area, I will simply tell them via my social media, they will come immediately" (N3) "I was invited to a communication community by a doctor who knows me from social media." (N3)
Better informed constituents	"List of aids I have given to community is published on my social media." (N3)
Better political image	"When we exist politically on social media, constituents will put trust on us." (P2)

Table 6. External affordance effects

## 5. DISCUSSION

Figure 1 summarizes the findings and their possible links. Social media use by politicians offers both internal and external affordances. The emergence of these affordances is influenced by diverse

constraints. Each of the affordance categories has various effects. For example, possible personal attacks, through bullying, may hinder or limit politicians to use social media for personal branding. Links between internal and external affordances may be bidirectional. The same case goes for links between affordances and effects. Idea storming may equip politicians for social media use of value sharing. However, further investigation is needed to explicate the links more systematically.

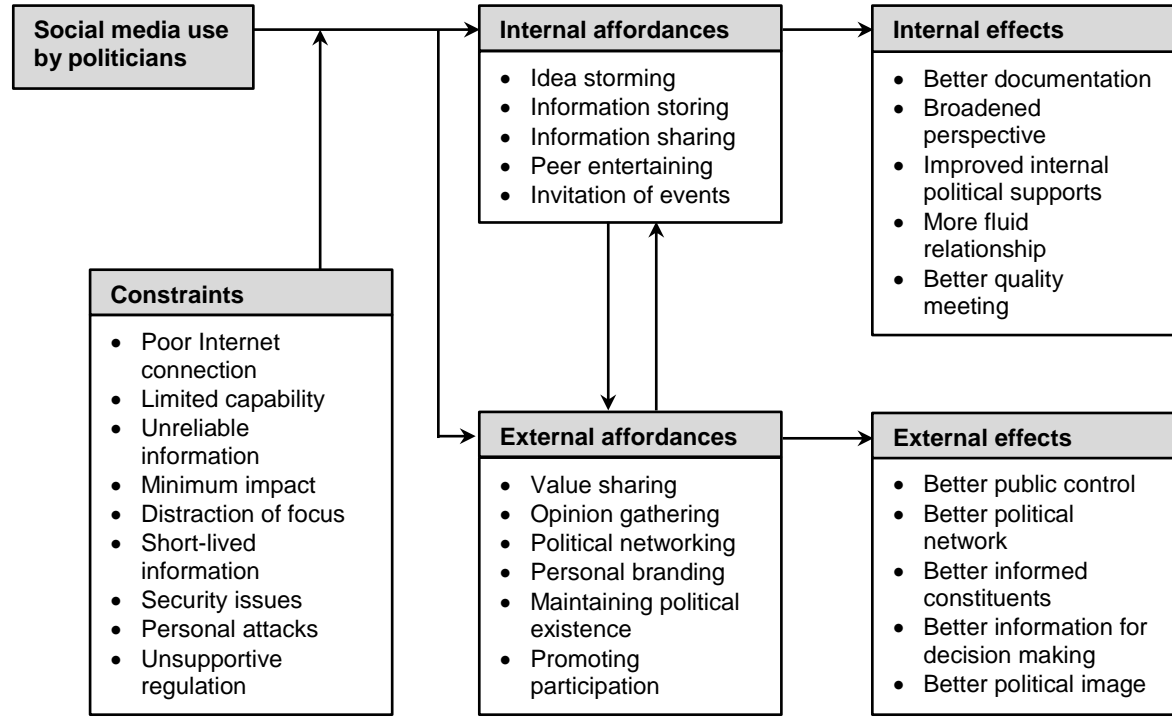


Figure 1. Affordances, constraints, and effects of social media use by politicians

Next, we revisit the research questions posted in the outset to guide the discussion on social media affordances and effects, along with possible constraints: (a) What affordances offered by social media use by politicians?; (b) What constraints hindering the use of social media by politicians for eParticipation initiatives?; and (c) What are the effects of social media use in eParticipation by Indonesian politicians?

## 5.1 Affordances

### 2.1.1 Internal versus external affordances

Identified affordances and constraints show how politicians use social media to work as a representative at the Indonesian parliament. The classification of affordance is to show whether there is a relationship between internal and external affordance that will lead to affordances effect. In general, eParticipation initiative strategy in Indonesia depends on the electoral area where the politicians were elected (N1, N2, N3, S1, S2).

Our analysis indicates that internal affordances are influencing external affordances of social media use in eParticipation. Several instances can be provided here. First, value-sharing (external affordance) allows politicians to have a discussion and idea storming (internal affordance) with fellow parliament members before they appear in public such as TV show, press conference and public hearing (N2, P1, P2, P3). This actualized affordance may lead to a better personal branding (external affordance) of a politician in public and to support their political existence (external affordance) on social media (N2, P2). In addition, this will promote citizen participation (external affordance) by stimulating them to take part in the direct public hearing and online discussion on social media as well (N2, N3, P1, P3).

Second, information storing (internal affordance) is perceived by politicians with low Internet exposure in the constituency (N1). Our analysis asserts that even though politicians perceived only internal affordances of social media such as information storing on the personal website (N1) and conversation storing on WhatsApp, they also give rise to the emergence of external affordance from practices such as value-sharing and maintaining political existence. Politicians might not intend to use social media for value sharing; however external affordance of value sharing emerged from the practice in relation to goals and actors. This empirical fact is in line with the concept where “affordance exists whether the actor cares about them or not, whether they are perceived or not, and even whether there is perceptual information for them exists or not” (Pozzi et al., 2014, p. 6). Furthermore, information storing may lead to networking and it may give effect to better political networks; this is supported by one of the informants claiming that people acknowledged him offline from his ideas and political views on social media (N3). Likewise, one informant argued that during the campaign he approached the youth with the help of social media (N2). By posting ideas and perspective on his Twitter, there were some young sympathetic social media influencers who agreed with his views and willingly helped to pass his political view via Twitter (N2).

### *2.1.2 Affordance changes over time for politicians*

Social media use by politicians to approach constituent is more favourable during a campaign period. Politicians were used to utilizing social media vigorously during the campaign but lessen the intensity once elected as a representative (N2, S1, S2). This caused affordance shifting for politicians due to changed goals before and after elected as representatives (N1, N2). After being elected, they mainly used social media for value sharing and opinion gathering from constituent (N2, N3). This proves that affordances are possibilities of goal-oriented action, emerging from the relation between technology and actors within an organizational system afforded to a specified group of actors (Markus & Silver 2008; Zammuto, Griffith, Majchrzak, Dougherty, & Faraj 2007).

In sum, affordances change when objectives of the actors change too. For instance, a majority of representatives at the local level relied mainly on traditional media such as newspaper, offline campaign activities, TV, and print media during the campaign period (P1, P2, P3, S1, S2). Arguably because traditional media provides more coverage to the area where Internet reach is low, thus traditional media are more effective to achieve goals (P2, S2). Then after being elected they begin to perceive social media affordances in relation to the goals as representatives. This type of affordance is emerging from practices involving technology and related to the experience, skills, and cultural understanding of the user (Bloomfield, Latham, & Vurdubakis 2010). Social media strategists recommend several key learning for politicians who wants to harness social media include firstly, regularity and consistency in using social media are important since social media is not an instant tool to make politician reputable amongst constituents overnight (S2). They should build social media base even before the campaign period to assure young voters the genuineness of their presence. Secondly, social media use should be sustainable even after being elected as representatives. Elected politicians should keep their political existence on social media by using it for eParticipation purposes such as promoting participation, gathering aspiration and discussing important issues that require citizen involvement via social media. That way politicians will gain trust from citizens, this is important for a future career in politics.

## **5.2 Constraints**

Social media create positive capabilities enabling particular purposes. However, social media may also constraint actors in achieving purposes, representing the dual concept of affordances (Hutchby 2001; Volkoff & Strong 2013). Politicians may be restricted from achieving their goal using social media when they perceived more constraints than affordances. In this study constraints are captured from two standpoints, the initial use of social media usually before politicians are elected and after using it for sometimes. We grouped identified constraints from this study into (a) technological, (b) informational constraint, (c) personal, and (d) legal constraints.

Due to lack of Internet exposure for constituents in the electoral area, politicians decided not to use social media for opinion gathering before and after elected (N1, P2). In addition, security issues like hacking, spamming and website defacement led politicians to utilize social media ineffectively (N2, P3). We classify these constraints as technological, where ICT infrastructure is the main cause constraining politicians to use social media.

Although significant impacts of social media use to increase the support from young constituents during the campaign was effective (N2), it is not the case for political discourse with elected politicians in small cities in Indonesia (S1). Therefore, the feedback is not yet optimal (P1) due to the unreliable content on social media and awareness of youth on orchestrated content on social media (S1, S2, N1, P2). The youth is being sceptical towards political discourse since social media content can be manipulated (S1). Hence, using social media for such activity as the main tool for eParticipation is not recommended, using social media as supporting tool is more relevant (S1, N1, N2, N3). Furthermore, short-lived nature of information on social media holds back politicians to use it for campaign simply because the circulated information will be easily forgotten (S2). These examples are informational constraints.

Perceived constraints after using social media for sometimes include distraction of focus. Social media lead to a negative effect when it could distract politicians' focus of attention by using it for entertainment source at the meeting (P2). Limited capability of politicians such as lack of time and lack of technical skill also hinder politicians from harnessing social media affordance (N2, P3). Those factors are related to capability and perceptive of social media use therefore they are considered as personal constraints.

Lastly, legal constraints refer to legal consequences of social media use include personal attack to politicians and unsupportive legislations. Usually, they will get online-bullying content after conveying political stands on social media (N2, P3). In addition, there are regulations that make politicians reluctant to use social media since freedom of speech is not fully covered by the legislation (N2). Those constraints may hinder politicians to harness external affordances such as value sharing and personal branding.

### **5.3 Effects**

Internal affordance such as information storing may lead to a better documentation since politicians feel that searching online database of legislation or news is easier than to look for them offline (P2). Likewise, Internal idea storming between parliament members by exchanging ideas through social media will broaden politician's perspective on particular issues (P3). Discussions on WhatsApp between parliament members are usually extended to face-to-face meetings. This actualization of internal affordance may contribute to an effective parliament meeting resulting in a better quality meeting. Peer entertaining as internal affordance may lead to a more fluid relationship when politicians are able to understand more fellow parliament members through jokes and humorous contents shared on social media (N2, N3, S2).

Value sharing, opinion gathering, political networking, personal branding, political existence maintaining and political participation promoting are among identified external affordances of social media use in eParticipation. External affordances will create outcomes, the so-called external affordance effects. For instance, external affordance of value sharing may create an effect such as better public control when politicians share ideas and activities as a means of a public control for constituents (N3, P2). One informant argued that online information on social media is not taken into consideration when it comes to decision-making processes (N1). She relies mainly on the actual issues that have been discussed in the commissions (N1). Other informants argued that relevant online information from social media together with other considerations such as customary tradition at the institution, empirical data from the constituency, public hearing, and direct aspirations (demonstrations and letters) will be taken into account in the decision-making process at the parliament (N2, N3, P1, P2, P3, S1, S2). In addition, when politicians perceived external affordance of opinion gathering, this

will give effect to create a diverse basis on policy-making processes to obtain a better decision (N3, P3). Personal branding on social media may lead to a better political reputation since citizens see their existence on social media usually equals with a willingness to communicate directly, open to criticisms and suggestions (P2).

In sum, these internal and external affordances that lead to outcomes are perceived by politicians to meet their goals related to the function as representatives. This includes formulating legislations, establishing state budget and supervising the executive. According to Strong et al. (2014), affordance effects are as an intermediary between actualization and ultimate goals. We have shown that affordance effect occurs when politicians actualized affordances to the goals. However, the relationship between internal and external effects should be examined further since in this study we only focused on what outcomes occurred when politicians actualized internal and/or external affordances.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

In this paper, we have identified affordances, constraints, and effects of social media use in eParticipation by Indonesian politicians. By doing so, we have contributed to the area of eParticipation research by demonstrating how affordances are related to actors and emerging from social practices involving technology, the experience, skills and cultural understanding of the user (politicians) (Robey, Raymond, & Anderson 2012; Zheng & Yu 2016). In addition, application of TACT provides new insights in explaining the consequence of technology use (social media) in individuals (politicians) (Bernhard et al. 2013; Majchrzak & Markus 2013; Markus & Silver 2008; Pozzi et al. 2014). TACT also contributes to get a better understanding of social media by identifying its affordances and constraints in eParticipation (Joseph 2012; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Majchrzak et al. 2013)

Our study offered three main contributions. Firstly, it identified social media internal and external affordances including the link between the two. Secondly, it identified and classified factors constraining politicians in harnessing social media affordance for eParticipation. We grouped constraints into several categories according to their nature include personal constraints, technological constraints, informational constraints, and legal constraints. Identification of affordances and constraints allows for investigating the possibilities for people using technology in unintended ways. Lastly, it identified internal and external effects of social media use.

Practical implication of this study includes providing description of social media affordance and constraints allowing politicians and regulatory institutions to design and plan social media strategy for eParticipation in Indonesia. Social media are important in today's world especially among politicians in Indonesia. Hence the presence of social media technology could help politicians delivering a better public control, improved decision-making process, better political reputation, better political network, and better informed constituent.

Limitations for our study firstly include the interviews with social media strategist need to be validated with politicians who hired them. Secondly, this study does not include further investigation on the relationship between internal and external affordance effect, thus affordance effect mechanism should be investigated further. In addition how identified internal and external affordance impacts on organizational changes should be examined further. We leave this for future research.

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